Appointment of District Manager for Tehri and Uttarkashi

†3850. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the criterion for granting the status of District Manager, Telecommunication to a district ;

(b) whether the post of District Manager will be given to Tehri and Uttarkashi districts of Uttar Pradesh which are spread over 12485 sq. kilometer ; and

(c) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) As per the existing norms, the Telecom District is considered for upgradation to the level of Telecom District Manager when it attains the workload of 11,550 working connections.

(b) and (c) Tehri and Uttarkashi Revenue Districts are under the Uttarkashi Telecom district headed by Telecom District Engineer. Now it is being considered for upgradation to the level of Telecom District Manager since it has attained the workload of 11,550 DELs as on 31-3-2000.

Telephone facilities to Gram Sabhas of Tehri and Uttarakhand

†3851. SHRI MANOHAR KANT DHYANI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that telephone department of district Tehri had fixed a target to provide telephone facilities to 250 Gram Sabhas in the year 1998-99; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the target for the year 1999-2000 and by when this facility will reach to all 2619 villages togetherwith the number of villages of Tehri and Uttarkashi having this facility at present ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) and (b) For Tehri District targets were fixed to provide telephone facility in 250 villages including Gram Sabhas during 1998-99 and also in 250 villages including Gram Sabhas during 1999-2000.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

So far telephone facility has been provided in 900 villages including some Gram Sabhas. Remaining villages will be covered progressively by March, 2002.

Telephone Exchanges with STD facility in Gujarat

†3852. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Taluka or Tehsil Headquarters having telephone exchanges with STD facility in Gujarat till the year 1999;

(b) the number of Talukas in the State where this facility is not yet available and the details in this regard; and

(c) by when the STD facility is likely to be provided in such Taluka headquarters ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) Out of 223 Taluka Headquarters in Gujarat, 219 Taluka Headquarters were having Telephone Exchanges with STD facility till the year 1999.

(b) and (c) As on 31-3-2000 there are 226 Taluka Headquarters out of which 225 are having STD facility. Remaining one *i. e.* Kaparada Taluka, is not having any Telephone exchange. It has been planned to install telephone exchange with STD facility there during this year.

Charging of high rents for telephones

3853. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are charging high rents for telephones ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that efficiencies of technology are not being passed on to the telephone subscriber;

(c) whether any effort is being made to reduce costs of operation in the telecom system;

(d) if so, what innovative measures have been taken to reduce costs of operation in the telecom sector; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.